5:Huntingford E-5 (1938-1939) 1954 FLÓ Dorobo FLÓ

A comet is a sign of coming famine, not merely for the person who sees it, but for everybody.

This short statement may not seem to imply a very great use of magical practices. Nevertheless it is clear from the general trend of knowledge of the Dorobo that the important parts of their life are helped and controlled by magic. The recovery of ritual status after child-birth and after the birth of twins is achieved by magical means; the spirit-name given to a child is intended to link it, in a way that can quite properly be called magical, with the spirit-world, so that it starts life on good terms with those powerful and capricious beings; the whole idea of circumcision (even if it is borrowed) is that of the transition by means of a magico-religious performance from the state of boyhood to that of manhood; these and other observances and avoidances are all magic, and are done because people believe that by doing them they will be enabled to go on existing.

(c) Analysis of Beliefs

Ritual Values. Things which have ritual value fall into three categories: (1) things which provide sustenance, or are closely connected with such things; (2) things of the spirit world; (3) things used to restore ritual status:

(1) Honey is sacred, like milk to the Nandi; and in addition to the taboo on eating honey and fruit on the same day, trees, flowering plants, and grass have ritual value because they are all closely connected with the provision of honey: trees, because bees live in them; flowers, because bees get honey from them; and grass, because the flowers and trees may be damaged if it is burned. The last notion means that unlike the pastoral tribes, the Dorobo do not burn grass near forest.

(2) The spirits are offered honey and honey-wine, which thereby acquire an additional value in that their use is directed to both the dead and the living.

(3) Things used for the recovery of damaged ritual status include goats and sheep, and certain of their products, i. e. *siyat*, and fat, as well as 'butter' or *mosit ap tongina* from cows. All these come from sources which formerly were hardly possessed at all by most Dorobo, and even to-day only on a small scale. Honey-wine is used a good deal, as well as white earth.

Each period of life has what might be called a standard ritual status, which is changed to a different standard on circumcision, when a boy becomes a man and a girl a woman, with the right to marry and produce children. The ritual status of normal adults is altered under certain conditions: (1) a man setting out to hunt is not in the same ritual state as when he is staying quietly at home, and he must not have sexual intercourse at such a time, i. e. just before he starts or, should he have an opportunity, while away; (2) a person sick of an illness has a status different from that of other people; (3) touching a corpse causes deterioration of ritual status; (4) the breaking of a taboo affects ritual status; (5) women suffer deterioration of ritual status through the birth of a child before marriage, the birth of twins, and even, to a lesser extent, normal birth. In all cases, the status must be restored by a ritual performance.

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Maintenance of ritual relations with the spirits is effected by the recognised offerings made to them; and with 'nature', on which the food supply depends, by other means (see below).

The World Order. In the myths related at the beginning of § 5, the thunder plays an important part, and is even portrayed as a man. One might almost assume from this that he was believed to be an earth-dweller who began a second life in the sky as the thunder-god who controls the rain, for the notions of rain, mist, and thunder are all interwoven, and the rainbow is "the arm of *Iist* that draws water for him". These myths reflect the Dorobo attitude of the people to their surroundings. One of the chief features of the forest is heavy rain and frequent mist, and it would be surprising if we did not find among them the conception of some sort of rain-being who brought mist. Again, since rain is plentiful and droughts rare, the rainmaker is not needed, and although the lowest known rainfall, 26 inches in 1933 at a place two miles from the edge of the forest (and probably a little higher in the forest), would indeed constitute a drought year elsewhere, in the absence of both crops and cattle an occasional low rainfall does not matter so long as there is enough to make the plants flower. Even a heavy rainfall of 70 inches or over does no more than cause temporary inconvenience where there are no crops to be damaged and the slopes prevent flooding. The Tindiret forest is, in fact, an ideal place for hunters to live in. However prolonged the dry season, the conditions for wild life are better there than in the open plains below, and low rainfall has never yet prevented a supply of game to hunt or trap. Whether the people are able to kill enough game to ensure a supply of food is another matter, and the inter-relation is not so much that between man and nature in general, but between man and the animals. Man's wrong-doing is thought to produce either a failure of the supply of animals, or his inability to kill or catch what is there in abundance.

Social Values. Things which are important to man because they are indispensable to him have what is called a social value as well as a ritual value, because between man and them there is created a relationship which man must maintain if he is not to suffer. The food supply of a hunting people is got from day to day and depends on the skill of the hunter. It is uncertain, because on any given day the hunter may not find game, or having found it may not kill. But precarious as such a life might seem, there is no evidence that in the past there was often any great scarcity from either of these two causes. The old men say, in fact, that whereas food is scarce under present-day conditions, in the old days when hunting was not restricted it was, if not always abundant, at least enough. Such a statement is not, I think, merely an exaggerated memory of better days, the outcome of a longing to get back to the forest, but it explains in part the otherwise remarkable scarcity of hunting magic and ritual procedure. Some hunting magic there certainly was, and fear and ignorance prevent free talk about it; but it is clear that when the food supply throughout the centuries is found adequate,

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825 different, for they also are intelligent. Every animal of the forest is alike [10]; we eat some, others we do not; but we like them all. We are of the forest, and they also are of the forest.)

Wild animals for the Dorobo have personality, not the kind that is expressed in the folk-tales of pastoral and agricultural Africans in which animals speak and behave like humans, but a real kind of personality that human beings like the Dorobo can respond to.

231 183 182 Bees, though not themselves sacred, are analogous to cattle among the Nandi, and their product has great social value and hence strong ritual value. Besides giving honey with its many uses, bees provide an occupation which is less strenuous than hunting and can thus be continued by older men who are still reasonably active but not active enough to stand all the rigours of a hunter's life.

824 182 183 Edible plants have social value, but since under existing conditions there is no scarcity of them, there is no ritual relationship between them and men.

The clan has a social value not found among the Nandi, for the Dorobo are not a tribe in the same sense that the Nandi are, and although the expression *ki Okiek*, "we are Dorobo", means a good deal, it has not the same significance that the similar expression *ki Nandi*, "we are Nandi", gives when said by a Nandi. The real unit of the Dorobo is the clan, the significance and solidarity of which we have already tried to explain; and the effect of all that the clan means to the Dorobo is that it has an immense group-value, being the element that ensures horde solidarity.

776 182 [801] Personification and well-being. Rain and its inevitable concomitant the thunder are perhaps more striking in a forest than the sun, and it is reasonable that they should be personified in one figure: "*Ilat* was a man". This is probably an original Dorobo belief, for to the Nandi *Ilat* has the form of a bird. This personification expresses and fulfils the Dorobo need of personal contact with a dangerous element, and explains the actions of the Dorobo whom Sir Claud Hollis saw defying the "rain-god" [11]. The notion of *Asis* is much less concrete and definite, and in spite of occasional prayers to him, the conception of his functions is even less clear. Yet while *Ilat* may be regarded as the power which controls the weather, *Asis* seems to be the moving spirit behind everything, with the spirits of the dead as intermediaries between man and 'nature'. It is plain, however, that the well-being of the horde is maintained by keeping on the right side of these powers, and that the avoidance of public delicts is necessary to prevent disaster to the horde. Public delicts thus in one sense come under the head of religion, for their commission entails the breaking of the ritual relationship between man and

[10] That is, although some animals (the human kind or Dorobo) are more intelligent than others, and although the human kind eat some of the others but not all, nevertheless they are all alike, human and non-human, in that they all live side by side in the forest.

[11] Man 1909, 101.

6:Huntingford E-5 (1938-1939) 1953 FLA Dorobo FLA

The Dorobo divide the year into two parts, *Muainonik*, the dry season, when they used to go hunting the bigger game with bow and arrow; and *Iwot*, the wet season, when they set traps. Each season covers roughly half the year, the rain beginning to tail off in September and getting less and less till January, and then starting to work up again in March, reaching its peak about May; so that *Muainonik* comprises our months of October to March, and *Iwot*, April to September. The Dorobo have twelve months, all but two having the same names as the Nandi months, but they do not synchronize *:

Dorobo names:	Nandi names:		
Kipiriwo	*Kipsondet*	October	Muainonik
Kipsongot	*Kipsondet siew*	November	
Kipsondet ake	*Mulkui*	December	
Mulkui	*Ngetiotet* *	January	
Ngetiotet *	*Kiptamo*	February	
Kiptamo	*Iwot kut*	March	
Iwot kut	*Wakut*	April	Iwot
Wakut	*Ngei* *	May	
Mamut	*Rop tui*	June	
Rop tui	*Puret*	July	
Puroto	*Epeso*	August	
Yeporut	*Mulkui siew*	September	

The average rainfall at Kapchorua Farm, about two miles below the edge of the forest for the years 1929 to 1937 was 54.09 inches, the maximum being 69.17, the minimum 28.61. Details are given in the Appendix. In the forest itself I think the rainfall is undoubtedly a little higher, perhaps amounting to another 2-3 ins. in the course of an average year.

The Dorobo seem to have a better weather sense than the Nandi, and I found that they were generally accurate when making a forecast, whereas the Nandi are usually wrong when they try to foretell the weather. This weather sense is perhaps one of the reasons for their reputation among other tribes as rainmakers; for these Dorobo not only say that they have no rainmakers, but I could find no trace whatever of rainmaking activities, nor any hint that they ever had any. Climatic conditions are such, however, that in a hunting economy rainmaking is not a necessity.

The environment of the Dorobo provides them with food, skins, wool, and other vegetable materials. Iron they had not, and they still have no knowledge of ironworking, though they use iron implements. Their activities comprised hunting, trapping, food-gathering, hut-building, the production of honey, and the making of objects of wood, leather, and grass, such as traps, arrow-shafts, bows, honey-barrels, clothing, caps, baskets, and handles for tools. Objects of iron they have got for as far back as they can remember from the Nandi by exchange for such things as they can make or produce themselves.

* Throughout this paper I have written the velar nasal by the sign ŋ, representing the "long-tailed n". In words marked * the first consonant is the velar nasal.

13:Hollis T-5 (ca. 1908) 1909 FL6 Dorobo FL6

ORIGINAL ARTICLES.

Africa, East. With Plate M. Hollis.

126 **Some Dorobo Beliefs.** *By A. C. Hollis.* 101

I recently went for a trip through the little known country lying between Naivasha and the Anglo-German frontier, and was fortunate enough to obtain a snapshot of a Dorobo, who was a member of the caravan, spitting towards the rising sun before saying his morning prayer (Pl. M, Fig. 1). Whilst performing this ceremony he had to lay aside his sword.

[827] [821] [287] [411] 289 [411] [196]

The rains were overdue at the time, and I took photographs of the same Dorobo making medicine to prevent the rain from falling. Fig. 2 shows him whistling at and defying the rain-god. In Fig. 3 he has laid aside his bow, and whilst holding his sword upright is rubbing the handle rapidly between his two hands. This is done when the rain-god takes no notice of his defiant remarks, and insists on turning on the celestial water-tap. It is doubtless only a remarkable coincidence, but although the rain often threatened we had very little till we returned to the Uganda Railway, when it came down in torrents. All the natives of the caravan—Kikuyu, Kavirondo, and other East African tribes—believed that the Dorobo had kept off the rain, and I was told more than once that if it had not been for him we should have been washed away.

197 It is worthy of note that I met some Masai-Dorobo in the Rift Valley who did not speak Nandi like most of the Dorobo in both British and German East Africa. Whether their ancestors had never known this language or had forgotten it owing to long intercourse with the Masai, or whether they had been simply poor Masai, who, owing to the loss of their cattle, had become outcasts and taken to hunting, I was unable to ascertain.

A. C. HOLLIS.

[P 177]

/258 cont./

805 192 Today is called lgtñ or lgtüla, tomorrow lñpe or lñbe, yesterday aresch; like the Masai, they have but one word for the day before yesterday and the day after tomorrow, namely, millek; the next day is called to samag, the one then following to hag; for the days after that the Masai words are used.

XIV.

000 Religion. -- Prayer. -- Supplication feasts. -- Amulets. -- Sorcery. -- Evil eye.

771 171 776 [821] The religious views of the Wandorobo are identical with those that we have become acquainted with among the Masai,[1] except that they do not call God 'Ng ai, but Uēd. In songs God is also frequently called the black God, Uēd kabiassa; on the other hand designations analogous to the Masai expressions for clouds and the redness of the sky are not found here; the former are called adja kabaka, the latter adja kahoma. Of the constellations they know the ones that the Masai also know, and designate them with the same names. They have no pictorial representations of Uēd, for the same reasons as 782 the Masai. Everyone prays, married people and children at home, the dobonog along the way, if they are afflicted by trouble or illness; in everyday life the dobonog do not pray. The woman prays every morning while making the fire; when her husband and the children see this, they often place themselves beside her and also say a prayer. This always contains only a supplication, never any thanks. A supplication /259/ for protection runs: Uēd sigima gemischin; for children, Uēd nge hawa; for wives, Uēd nge mai; for meat, Uēd nge aga; for honey, Uēd nge agung; for food, Uēd nge e haiug; for health if 775 [171] one is sick, Uēd adudere an. They think about the fate of the soul -- in contrast to the Masai -- only very rarely, even the old people. The author met only a few aged Wandorobo who were able to make statements about this. These coincided with the reports of the Masai.

1, [For information on the religion of the Masai, see FL12 Masai, 18: Merker, category 116, pp. 268-279--Analyst]